Corynebacterium endocarditis species-specific risk factors and outcomes.

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BACKGROUND: Corynebacterium species are recognized as uncommon agents of endocarditis, but little is known regarding species-specific risk factors and outcomes in Corynebacterium endocarditis. METHODS: Case report and Medline search of English language journals for cases of Corynebacterium endocarditis. Inclusion criteria required that cases be identified as endocarditis, having persistent Corynebacterium bacteremia, murmurs described by the authors as identifying the affected valve, or vegetations found by echocardiography or in surgical or autopsy specimens. Cases also required patient-specific information on risk factors and outcomes (age, gender, prior prosthetic valve, other prior nosocomial risk factors (infected valve, involvement of native versus prosthetic valve, need for valve replacement, and death) to be included in the analysis. Publications of Corynebacterium endocarditis which reported aggregate data were excluded. Univariate analysis was conducted with chi-square and t-tests, as appropriate, with \( p = 0.05 \) considered significant. RESULTS: 129 cases of Corynebacterium endocarditis involving nine species met inclusion criteria. Corynebacterium endocarditis typically infects the left heart of adult males and nearly one third of patients have underlying valvular disease. One quarter of patients required valve replacement and one half of patients died. Toxigenic C. diphtheriae is associated with pediatric infections (\( p < 0.001 \)). Only C. amycolatum has a predilection for women (\( p = 0.024 \)), while C. pseudodiphtheriticum infections are most frequent in men (\( p = 0.023 \)). C. striatum, C. jeikeium and C. hemolyticum are associated with nosocomial risk factors (\( p < 0.001, 0.028, \) and 0.024, respectively). No species was found to have a predilection for any particular heart valve. C. pseudodiphtheriticum is associated with a previous prosthetic valve replacement (\( p = 0.004 \)). C. jeikeium infections are more likely to require valve replacement (\( p = 0.026 \)). Infections involving toxigenic C. diphtheriae and C. pseudodiphtheriticum are associated with decreased survival (\( p = 0.001 \) and 0.032, respectively). CONCLUSION: We report the first analysis of species-specific risk factors and outcomes in Corynebacterium endocarditis. In addition to species-specific associations with age, gender, prior valvular diseases, and other nosocomial risk factors, we found differences in rates of need for valve replacement and death. This review highlights the seriousness of these infections, as up to 28% of patients required valve replacement and 43.5% died.

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